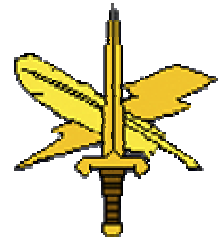




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**Public Affairs Office
Fort Riley, KS 66442
Telephone (785) 239-3033/3410 FAX (785) 239-2592
After Hours (785) 239-2222
E-mail: stephanie.perrin@riley.army.mil or
skidmord@riley.army.mil
www.riley.army.mil**



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
Stephanie Perrin, Assistant Media Relations Officer (785) 239-3033

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'BLACK LION' MEDICS MEET CHALLENGE

By Charles Wyatt
1st Bn., 28th Inf.

The 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry, "Black Lions" medical platoon trained in tactical combat casualty care Aug. 7-11 at Fort Campbell, Ky.

"This course provided great professional opportunities by extending my scope of practice in medical skills that surpassed any previous medical training I have ever attended," said Spc. Jesse Boatman.

The course emphasizes three stages of combat care: care under enemy fire, tactical field care and casualty evacuation.

Care under enemy fire is the stage that emphasizes applying tourniquets to casualties to prevent severe bleeding on the battlefield. During this stage, the "Black Lion" medics were taught to return fire as medics while under effective hostile fire from the enemy.

Tactical field care is the stage in which medics render care because they are no longer under effective hostile fire. Available medical care is still limited to that carried into the field by mission personnel. For medics, this typically means nasopharyngeal airways can now be used and bleeding can be further controlled. The goal is to get the casualties to stage-3, which is casualty evacuation.

CASEVAC is the last stage taught. It involves the care rendered once the casualty has been picked up by aircraft, vehicle or boat. Additional medical equipment and personnel should now be available to casualties during this stage.

CASEVAC should not be confused with medical evacuation because patients do not have to be evacuated on standard vehicles. Medics use any means possible to get the casualties to the closest medical treatment facility.

The "Black Lion" medics learned multiple tasks while attending the course, including needle chest decompression, using external jugular intravenous sticks and treatment of casualties in a stressful limited visibility environment while under enemy fire.

They had to complete a written test covering skills from the entire the course, negotiate a physically demanding obstacle course for evacuating battlefield casualties, use the fireman carry to move injured Soldiers to casualty collection points and place casualties on litters.

Technological innovations were introduced to the course in the form of a \$250,000 SIMMAN. This simulated casualty has a pulse, can breathe and can bleed.

All “Black Lion” medics attending the course graduated. “This was one of the best medical platoons to go through my course in all my years here at Fort Campbell,” said Sgt. 1st Class Niles Arrington, senior noncommissioned officer for the course.

An Honor Graduate award was presented to the medic who demonstrated the most proficiency while attending the course.

Pfc. Michael Cox was named honor graduate for the course and was honored by instructors with a 101st Air Assault coin for his achievement. Cox said, “This course was our first chance to better ourselves as medics and get first-hand experience from instructors that have performed these tasks in a combat environment.”

Training will continue for the “Black Lion” medics now that they have returned to Fort Riley. The medical platoon now takes their newly honed skills into a demanding fall training schedule.

“We have to train aggressively here at Fort Riley to ensure we can provide world-class medical support to the ‘Black Lions’ when we are called into combat,” Cox said.